

PAPER AGAINST GOLD,
AND
GLORY AGAINST PROSPERITY.
TO THE PEOPLE IN AND NEAR SALISBURY.

LETTER XXX.

The Bullion Committee's two years twice expired.—The Peace of 1814 saw the Bank Protection Bill renewed.—All the pretexts were vanished.—Ominous opinions.—New issue joined between the Author on the one part and the Paper partizans on the other.

GENTLEMEN,—In renewing my correspondence with you, after a lapse of more than four years, and after the wonderful events of the years 1814 and 1815, it may be necessary for me to remind you of the state in which we left the question of Paper against Gold, in the summer of 1811, when I remained at issue with the Bullion Committee, and also with the partizans of Paper-Money, appealing to TIME, the trier of all things, to decide between us. Four years is a considerable space of time; and, we shall see now, on which side TIME, thus far, has decided.

The Bullion Committee proposed to the House of Commons to compel the Bank to pay in gold and silver *at the end of two years from 1810*. The Ministry opposed this proposition; and asserted, that, *when peace returned*, specie would return, and the payment of it at the Bank would take place, *as a matter of course*, because the law, which protected the Bank against demands of payment in cash, would, of itself, *expire* at the end of six months, after peace should be made. This act was passed in December 1803. See Vol. I. page 338.

Now, in opposition to these two assertions, I was satisfied, that I *proved* it to be impossible for the Bank to pay in real money, in war or in peace, as long as the dividends on the debt continued to be paid. Well, Gentlemen, what has since been done? Has the Bank yet paid in Gold and Silver, though four years in-

stead of two have passed over our heads? You know well that it has not.

But, observe, peace was made in May, 1814. And what did the Ministry then do? Did they suffer the act to expire, "*as a matter of course*?" Did they make good their assertion, that Gold and Silver should come back with peace? They assured us, that it was the power of Napoleon which had robbed us of our gold and silver; and that, in order to get them back again, we must go on fighting and paying, till that power should be diminished. It was not only diminished in 1814, but it was destroyed. Napoleon was dethroned and banished, and the long-sighed-for event, the restoration of the Capets, took place. A Congress met at Vienna; all was so arranged, that peace in Europe promised to last for our lives, and peace with America had taken place too. Now, then, was the time to suffer the Bank Act to die that *natural death*, of which the Minister had so boldly talked in 1810. But, instead of this, what did the Ministry do? Why, they *renewed the act for another year*! And, you will please to observe, that, though this renewal did not actually become a *law* till after the return of Napoleon from Elba, it was distinctly stated by the Ministry, *before that time*, that the renewal would be proposed to the parliament; and Ministers in England seldom *propose*, as you know very well, any measure which the Houses refuse to adopt. Therefore there is no shadow of excuse for the renewal of the act, except, that the Bank cannot, in *peace* any more than in war, pay in Gold and Silver. This is a very good reason for renewing the act; but this is completely fulfilling my prediction; completely proving, and that by act of parliament to, the soundness of my former reasoning.

The parliament and, indeed, the country, were, as to this question, divided into two parties: one said, that the Bank would be able to pay in specie in two years: the other said, that the Bank was *always able* to pay, but that it would not

be *prudent* to suffer the Bank to pay, till *peace* came. I gave it as my opinion, that peace would not enable the Bank to pay; or, at any rate, that her Ladyship would not pay in Gold and Silver when peace should come. Thus far, then, time has proved me to have been right.

We must now wait for *TIME* again; but, happily, we shall not have to wait *long*. Peace is now again come; and come in a way, too, that seems to defy even chance to interrupt its duration. Not only is Napoleon down, but he is in our hands; he is banished to a rock, of which we have the sole command and possession; he is as completely in the power of our government as if they had him in the Tower of London. Therefore, this great obstacle to Gold and Silver payments is swept away. The Capets, or the *Bourbons*, as they call themselves, are restored. Spain has regained that beloved Ferdinand, in whose cause we were so zealous, and he has restored the Inquisition and the Jesuits. The Pope, to the great joy of loyal Protestants, is again in the chair of St. Peter; has again resumed his Keys and his Shepherd's crook. In short, our government, so far from dreading any enemy, is in *strict alliance* with every sovereign in Europe.

Now, then, are come the halcyon days. Now John Bull is to sit down in peace under his own vine and his own fig-tree with no one to make him afraid. Now there will be; there *can* be, no need of armies or navies. Now, then, my good neighbours, we shall, surely, see Gold and Silver return. Which of you will *bet* any thing on the affirmative of this proposition? My opinion is, that we shall not see it return; that we shall not see the Bank pay in Gold and Silver; that we shall not hear the Minister say, that the Old Lady is ready with her cash. In short, my opinion is, that another and another act of parliament, will convince even the most stupid and credulous, that, as long as the dividends on the National Debt are paid, so long will they be paid in Bank Notes, so long will the law to protect the Bank against demands in real money remain in full force; for, the man that needs more than two more acts of parliament to produce this conviction in his mind must be an *idiot*.

Let us wait, then, with patience for two years more; but, let us keep our eyes

steadily fixed on the movements of the Ministry and the Bank. Let us listen quietly to all they say, without seeming to take any notice of what they are about. If they *do* pay in cash at the end of two years, and still continue to pay the dividends, or the interest of the Debt, I will frankly acknowledge, that I ought to pass for an ignorant pretender all the remainder of my life. If they *do not* pay in cash at the end of two years more, then, what *they* ought to pass for I shall leave my readers to decide.

As to giving them a longer tether, that is wholly out of the question. Twelve years is the average length, it is said, of the life of man. I have already give them *four*. I will allow them two more; but, as the grey hairs begin to thicken very fast upon my head; as my sons and daughters begin to walk faster than their father and mother, I certainly shall not lengthen the tether; but, at the end of two years from this first day of the month of September, 1815, I shall, if I still hold a pen, and the old Lady does not pay the dividends in cash, assume it as a notoriously admitted fact, *that she never will and never can*.

Before I conclude this letter, however, I will just notice the strange doctrines which are beginning to be held. We hear people saying, and in print too, that *Paper Money* is a *better thing* than gold and silver coin. That it is more *commodious*; that it cannot be *sent out of the country* (which last is very true); that it is so much *clear gain to the nation*; that the nation would be *ruined*, if it were to use gold and silver coin instead of paper-money. These are ugly notions. They seem to be thrown out *to feel the pulse* of John Bull. They do not come forth *officially*; but they come from sources that render them rather more than suspicious. The *friends of government*; that is to say, those who, in some way or other, *gain by the taxes*, promulgate them; and hence we may pretty safely conclude, that they are not very disagreeable to the government itself. There is one person connected with the Old Lady, who has put forth such doctrines. Very natural, you will say. Yes, but it is not so very natural that we should adopt them into our political creed. These doctrines do not argue much in favour of our expectations of gold and silver payments. They put one in mind of Goldsmith's friend's high

eulogium on liver and bacon just when he was about to announce to his guest the absence of a promised venison pasty.

With these hints; with these motives to watchfulness, let us now lay aside the subject of *Paper against Gold*, and proceed to inquire what *good* this nation has derived from the late wars, in which we are said to have acquired glory that calls for thanksgivings and monuments. This inquiry shall be the subject of future letters. I am, Gentlemen,

Your faithful friend,

WM. COBBETT.

Botley, 1st Sept. 1815.

LETTER XXXI.

What is the condition of Great Britain, compared to what it would have been, if the wars against the French had not taken place?

GENTLEMEN,—The war, which began in 1793, is now over. The troops are not all come home, the ships are not all paid off, the account is not wound up; but, the war is over. Social Order is restored; the French are again under the power of the Bourbons; the Revolution is at an end; no change has been effected in England; our Boroughs, and our Church and Nobility and all have been preserved; our government tell us, that we have covered ourselves with glory. And now let us see what we have *gained* by this long war, what *we*, the people of England, Scotland, and Ireland, who pay taxes for the support of the people in office, the army, the navy, the sinecure placemen, the pensioners, and the Royal Family, have gained by this war.

But, here I shall be met at the threshold by Old George Rose, who will say: "that is not a fair way of putting the question." George, who is a person of such well-known merit, that he has sinecure places worth about £4,000 a year; the greater part of which descends in reversion to his eldest son. George, who is very long-sighted, and can perceive conclusions which are greatly at a distance from the premises, will meet me at the very out-set, and cry "hold! hold! it is not of what the poor fellows have gained that you ought to talk to them. You ought to ask them how much more they would have lost than

"they have lost, had it not been for the war, now happily terminated amidst such a blaze of glory."

George sees what I am going at. He knows, if you do not, what a picture I am going to draw, and how clearly I shall trace our Debts, Taxes, Paupers, and manifold miseries, now only beginning to be seriously felt, to the war; and, therefore, he would make you believe (as he has endeavoured to do in print long ago), that it would have been still worse for you, if the war had not taken place.

Gentlemen, I will leave even George Rose nothing to complain of. I will take the question in his own way; and I shall, for argument's sake, voluntarily make admissions in his favour, for which he (though that is saying a great deal) would not have the conscience to ask.

It is impossible to say, or even to form any thing like a correct estimate of, what would have been the consequences, in England, of remaining at peace in 1793, instead of going to war against the French people. But, it is easy to name some things which would *not* have taken place, even if peace had been preserved. For instance, the earth of England would still have retained its former qualities; the sun, the moon, the stars, the rains, the frosts, the snows, would not have been obstructed by peace. The animals, of all sorts, would have continued breeding. Young people would have continued to grow up and to see their parents buried. We should, in short, have had the same air to breathe, and the same kinds of food and drink, and the same kinds of clothes to wear.

There are some of the most resolute Anti-jacobins, who will assert the contrary of the greater part of all this. They will insist, that all nature would have suffered; and that England would have become a wild waste, inhabited by savage men and savage beasts. This, however, we will not believe. We must confine our admissions, great as they are to be, far within this compass.

I will admit, then, that, if the People of France had been suffered to remain at peace, that, as far as the circumstances of the two nations were, previous to the French revolution, alike, so far the People of England would have followed their example. The Jacobins, as the friends of Reform were called, were

very active. The success of the People of France, in overturning a most horrid despotism, had produced great pleasure in England amongst the mass of the people; and, I have no doubt, that, had our government continued at peace with France; that, had it not adopted any of its hostile measures in 1792; that if it had continued the former relationships of peace, commerce, and intercourse with France, some *very great changes* would have taken place in England.

What, then, according to the above supposition, would those changes have been? We are told of the burning of country houses, of the demolition of gentlemen's property, of the pillaging of Aristocrats, of the massacres and guillotining of the French. But, first let it be observed, that, all these, which took place after July 1792, are fairly to be ascribed to *the war*: that war which the Bourbons and Aristocrats, and the Prussians and Austrians made upon the French, in order to compel them to return to a submission to that despotism, which they had overturned. Previous to this time, though there were many acts of unjustifiable violence on the part of some of the people, there were none of those bloody scenes which took place *after* the invasion of France by the Aristocrats and the Prussians, with the Duke of Brunswick at their head, in 1792, when the King was alive, and was enjoying as much power, as many very wise men think a King ought to enjoy. It was, therefore, not till *war* was begun against the French People, that those bloody scenes ensued, which are, by the Aristocrats, ascribed to the *revolution*, when they ought to be, and are by all just men, ascribed to *the war* waged against the French People.

In seeking, therefore, to ascertain what changes would have taken place in England, we must always bear in mind how far the French had gone, *previous to their being attacked by the Emigrants and the Allies*; and, previous to our hostile measures against them, indicating intentions of war. Because, all the changes, which the French made *after that*, we have a right to suppose they would *not have made had it not been for the war*; that very war, of which we were the main supporters, and which has only now come to a close after twenty-two years duration.

What, then, *were the changes*, which

the French (whose *example*, observe, it was said we should follow) made previous to the war? But before I come to state these, I must notice, that the situation of England at the commencement of the French revolution was very different from that of France. The sufferings of the latter had been so much greater, that it is not reasonable to suppose that the people here would have gone such lengths, in the way of resentment, as the people of France went. This leads us to call to our recollection what the sufferings of the people of France really were.

It is notorious, that, for ages, previous to the French revolution, we, in this country, constantly described the French as slaves; our histories, our moral essays, our political writings, our poems, our plays, all describe them as slaves, and as cowards for submitting to such a government as then existed. Now, indeed, our conductors of newspapers, with a degree of impudence absolutely without parallel, abuse the French people for having destroyed the *PATERNAL sway of the Bourbons*!—Let us now see, then, what was the nature of that "*paternal sway*;" and, when we have taken a full view of it, and of its effects, we shall be able to judge whether it be probable that the people of France will listen to those who are endeavouring to bring them back to the blessings of that "*paternal sway*."—But, how are we to get at a *true* account of the nature and effects of the Bourbon government? We must resort to some *authority*, to somebody's word, whose word is to be relied on.—The authority to which I am about to refer, is that of Mr. ARTHUR YOUNG, who is, and who has been, for many years past, *Secretary to the Board of Agriculture*, with a salary, paid by the public, of 500*l.* a year.—Mr. Young is, in the first place, a man of great talents; and, perhaps, it is impossible to find out a person so fit to be referred to as Mr. Young. His studies had been of that kind, which peculiarly fitted him for an inquiry of this description; and he was in France at precisely the time for making it. He made, during the years 1787, 1788, and 1789, an agricultural and politico-economical survey of the kingdom of France. He was there when the revolution began; he was there during its progress until the new constitution was formed. He was not only

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living in great intimacy with many of the most respectable leaders in that work; but, he himself, crossing the kingdom in all directions, made himself minutely acquainted, by the means of personal inquiry and the evidence of his senses, of every particular relating to the nature and effects of those "*ancient Ordinances and Customs*," of which the partizans of the war now boast.—During his travels, he gives an account of these, by citing numerous instances of the abominable tyranny under which the people groaned; and, at the close of his work, he publishes *Reflections on the Revolution*, beginning with a summary description of the state of the people under the Bourbon government, and, to the evidences of his own observation, adding, as he proceeds, the complaints contained in the *Cahiers*, that is to say, the lists of complaints made to the National Assembly by the most respectable people of the different provinces, to which *Cahiers* he refers in the notes.—This part of Mr. Young's work I am now about to insert. I beg you to go through it with attention. You will see how every part of it applies to the subject on which we are, and also to the present crisis.

ON THE REVOLUTION OF FRANCE.

"The gross infamy which attended *lettres de cachet* and the Bastile, during the whole reign of Louis XV. made them esteemed in England, by people not well informed, as the most prominent features of the despotism of France. They were certainly carried to an excess hardly credible; to the length of being sold, with blanks, to be filled up with names at the pleasure of the purchaser; who was thus able, in the gratification of private revenge, to tear a man from the bosom of his family, and bury him in a dungeon, where he would exist forgotten, and die unknown!* But such excesses could not

* An anecdote which I have from an authority to be depended on, will explain the profligacy of Government, in respect to these arbitrary imprisonments. Lord Albemarle, when ambassador in France, about the year 1753, negotiating the fixing of the limits of the American colonies, which, three years after, produced the war, calling one day on the minister for foreign affairs, was introduced, for a few minutes, into his cabinet, while he finished a short conversation in the apartment in which he usually received those who conferred

be common in any country; and they were reduced almost to nothing, from the accession of the present King. The great mass of the people, by which I mean the lower and middle ranks, could suffer very little from such engines, and, as few of them are objects of jealousy, had there been nothing else to complain of, it is not probable they would ever have been brought to take arms. The abuses attending the levy of taxes were heavy and universal. The kingdom was parcelled into generalities, with an intendant at the head of each, into whose hands the whole power of the crown was delegated for every thing except the military authority; but particularly for all affairs of finance. The generalities were subdivided into elections, at the head of which was a *sub-député*, appointed by the intendant. The rolls of the *taille*, *capitation*, *vingtièmes*, and other taxes, were distributed among districts, parishes, and individuals, at the pleasure of the intendant, who could exempt, change, add, or diminish, at pleasure. Such an enormous power, constantly acting, and from which no man was free, must, in the nature of things, degenerate in many cases into absolute tyranny. It must be obvious, that the friends, acquaintances, and de-

with him. As his lordship walked backwards and forwards, in a very small room (a French cabinet is never a large one), he could not help seeing a paper lying on the table, written in a large legible hand, and containing a list of the prisoners in the Bastile, in which the first name was Gordon. When the minister entered, Lord Albemarle apologized for his involuntarily remarking the paper; the other replied, that it was not of the least consequence, for they made no secret of the names. Lord A. then said, that he had seen the name of Gordon first in the list, and he begged to know, as in all probability the person of this name was a British subject, on what account he had been put into the Bastile. The minister told him that he knew nothing of the matter, but would make the proper inquiries. The next time he saw Lord Albemarle, he informed him, that, on inquiring into the case of Gordon, he could find no person who could give him the least information; on which he had had Gordon himself interrogated, who solemnly affirmed, that he had not the smallest knowledge or even suspicion, of the cause of his imprisonment, but that he had been confined thirty years; however, added the minister, I ordered him to be immediately released, and he is now at large. Such a case wants no comment.

pendants of the intendant, and of all his *sub-delegués*, and the friends of these friends, to a long chain of dependance, might be favoured in taxation at the expense of their miserable neighbours; and that noblemen, in favour at court, to whose protection the intendant himself would naturally look up, could find little difficulty in throwing much of the weight of their taxes on others, without a similar support. Instances, and even gross ones, have been reported to me in many parts of the kingdom, that made me shudder at the oppression to which numbers must have been condemned, by the undue favours granted to such crooked influence. But, without recurring to such cases, what must have been the state of the poor people paying heavy taxes, from which the nobility and clergy were exempted? A cruel aggravation of their misery, to see those who could best afford to pay, exempted, because able!—The inrolments for the militia, which the *Cahiers* call an *injustice without example*,* were another dreadful scourge on the peasantry; and, as married men were exempted from it, occasioned in some degree that mischievous population, which brought beings into the world, in order for little else than to be starved. The *corvées*, or police of the roads, were annually the ruin of many hundreds of farmers; more than 300 were reduced to beggary in filling up one *valé* in Lorraine: all these oppressions fell on the *tiers état* only; the nobility and clergy having been equally exempted from *tailles*, militia, and *corvées*. The penal code of finance makes one shudder at the horrors of punishment inadequate to the crime.† A few features will sufficiently characterize the old government.

* *Nob. Briey*, p. 6, &c. &c.

† It is calculated by a writer (*Recherches et Consid. par M. le Baron de Cormeré*, tom. ii. p. 187.) very well informed on every subject of finance, that, upon an average, there were annually taken up and sent to prison or the galleys, Men, 2,310, Women, 896, Children, 201. Total, 3,407. 300 of these to the galleys (tom i. p. 112). The salt confiscated from these miseries amounted to 12,633 quintals, which at the mean price of 8 liv. are 101,064 liv.

2,772 lb. of salted flesh, at 10s. 1,386

1,086 horses, at 50 liv. 54,300

52 carts, at 150 liv. 7,800

Fines, 53,207

Seized in houses, 103,530

323,287

1. Smugglers of salt, armed and assembled to the number of five, in Provence, a fine of 500 liv. and nine years galleys;—in all the rest of the kingdom, death.

2. Smugglers armed, assembled, but in number under five, a fine of 300 liv. and three years galleys. Second offence, death.

3. Smugglers, without arms, but with horses, carts, or boats; a fine of 300 liv. if not paid, three years galleys. Second offence, 400 liv. and nine years galleys.—In Dauphiné, second offence, galleys for life.—In Provence, five years galleys.

4. Smugglers, who carry the salt on their back, and without arms, a fine of 200 liv. and, if not paid, are flogged and branded. Second offence, a fine of 300 liv. and six years galleys.

5. Women, married and single smugglers, first offence a fine of 100 liv. Second, 300 liv. Third, flogged, and banished the kingdom for life. Husbands responsible both in fine and body.

6. Children smugglers, the same as women.—Fathers and mothers responsible; and, for defect of payment, flogged.

7. Nobles, if smugglers, deprived of their nobility; and their houses raised to the ground.

8. Any persons in employments (I suppose employed in the salt-works or the revenue), if smuggler, death. And such as assist in the theft of salt in the transport, hanged.

9. Soldiers smuggling, with arms, are hanged; without arms, galleys for life.

10. Buying smuggled salt to resell it, the same punishment as for smuggling.

11. Persons in the salt employments, empowered, if two, or one with two witnesses, to enter and examine houses, even of the privileged orders.

12. All families, and persons liable to the *taille*, in the provinces of the *Grandes Gabelles* inrolled, and their consumption of salt for the *pot and salière* (that is, the daily consumption, exclusive of salting meat, &c. &c.) estimated at 7 lb. a head per annum, which quantity they are forced to buy, whether they want it or not, under the pain of various fines, according to the case.

The *Capitaineries* were a dreadful scourge on all the occupiers of land. By this term, is to be understood the paramountship of certain districts, granted by the king, to princes of the blood, by which they were put in possession of the property of all game, even on lands not belonging to them; and, what is very singular, on manors

granted long before to individuals; so that the erecting of a district into a *capitainerie*, was an annihilation of all manerial rights to game within it. This was a trifling business, in comparison of other circumstances; for, in speaking of the preservation of the game in these *capitaineries*, it must be observed, that by game must be understood whole droves of wild boars, and herds of deer, not confined by any wall or pale, but wandering, at pleasure, over the whole country, to the destruction of the crops; and to the peopling of the gillies by the wretched peasants, who presumed to kill them, in order to save that food which was to support their helpless children. The game in the *capitainerie* of Montceau, in four parishes only, did mischief to the amount of 184,263 liv. per annum.* No wonder then that we should find the people asking '*Nous demandons à grand cris la destruction des capitaineries & celle de toute sorte de gibier.*'† And what are we to think of demanding, as a favour, the permission—'*De Nettoyer ses grains, de faucher les prés artificiels, et d'enlever ses chaumes sans égard pour la perdrix ou tout autre gibier.*'‡ Now, an English reader will scarcely understand it without being told, that there were numerous edicts for preserving the game, which prohibited weeding and hoeing, lest the young partridges should be disturbed; steeping seed, lest it should injure the game; manuring with right-soil, lest the flavour of the partridges should be injured by feeding on the corn so produced; mowing hay, &c. before a certain time, so late as to spoil many crops; and taking away the stubble, which would deprive the birds of shelter. The tyranny exercised in these *capitaineries*, which extended over 400 leagues of country, was so great, that many *cahiers* demanded the utter suppression of them.§ Such were the

exertions of arbitrary power which the lower orders felt directly from the royal authority; but, heavy as they were, it is a question whether the others, suffered circuitously through the nobility and the clergy, were not yet more oppressive? Nothing can exceed the complaints made in the *cahiers* under this head. They speak of the dispensation of justice in the manerial courts, as comprising every species of despotism: the districts indeterminate—appeals endless—irreconcilable to liberty and prosperity—and irrevocably proscribed in the opinion of the public*—augmenting litigations—favouring every species of chicane—ruining the parties—not only by enormous expenses on the most petty objects, but by a dreadful loss of time. The judges commonly ignorant pretenders, who hold their courts in *cabarets*, and are absolutely dependant on the seigneurs.† Nothing can exceed the force of expression used in painting the oppressions of the seigneurs, in consequence of their feudal powers. They are "*vexations qui sont le plus grand fléau des peuples.*"‡—*Esclavage affligeant.*§—*Ce régime désastreux.*|| That the *feodalité* be for ever abolished. The countryman is tyrannically enslaved by it. Fixed and heavy rents; vexatious processes to secure them; appreciated unjustly to augment them: rents, *solidaires*, and *revenables*; rents, *chéantes*, and *levantes*; *fumages*. Fines at every change of the property, in the direct as well as collateral line; feudal redemption (*retraite*); fines on sale, to the eighth and even the sixth penny; redemptions (*rachats*) Injurious in their origin, and still more so in their extension: *banalité* of the mill, ¶ of the oven, and of the wine and cyder-press; *corvées* by custom;

* Rennes, art. 12.

† Neversois, art. 43.

‡ Tiers Etat de Vannes, p. 24.—That is "Vexations which are the greatest scourge of the people."

§ T. Etat Clermont Ferrand, p. 52.—That is: "Cruel Slavery."

|| Tiers Etat. Auxerre, art. 6.—That is: "This ruinous system of governing."

¶ By this horrible law, the people are bound to grind their corn at the mill of the seigneur only; to press their grapes at his press only; and to bake their bread in his oven; by which means the bread is often spoiled, and more especially wine, since in Champagne those grapes which, pressed immediately, would make white wine, by waiting for the press, which often happens, make red wine only.

* Cahier du tiers état de Meaux, p. 42.

† De Mantes and Meulan, p. 40.—Also, Nob. & Tier Etat de Peronne, p. 42. De Trois ordres de Montfort, p. 23.—That is: "We most earnestly pray for the suppression of the Capitaineries, and that of all the game laws."

‡ De Mantes and Meulan, p. 58.—That is to say, "the favour to weed their corn, to mow their upland grass, and to take off their stubble, without consulting the convenience of the partridges, or any other sort of game."

§ Clergé de Provins & Montereau, p. 35.—Clergé de Paris, p. 25.—Clergé de Mantes & Meulan, p. 45, 46.—Clergé de Laon, p. 11.—Nob. de Nemours, p. 17.—Nob. de Paris, p. 42.—Nob. d'Arras, p. 29.

corvées by usage of the fief: *corvées* established by unjust decrees; *corvées* arbitrary, and even phantastical; servitudes; *prestations*, extravagant and burthensome; collections by assessment incollectable; *aveux, minus, impunissements*; litigations ruinous and without end: the rod of seigneurial finance for ever shaken over our heads: vexation, ruin, outrage, violence, and destructive servitude, under which the peasants, almost on a level with Polish slaves, can never but be miserable, vile, and oppressed.* They demand also, that the use of hand-mills be free; and hope that posterity, if possible, may be ignorant that feudal tyranny in Bretagne, armed with the judicial power, has not blushed even in these times at breaking hand mills, and at selling annually to the miserable, the faculty of bruising between two stones a measure of buck-wheat or barley.† The very terms of these complaints are unknown in England, and untranslatable; they have probably arisen long since the feudal system ceased in this kingdom. What are these tortures of the peasantry in Bretagne, which they call *chevanchés, quintaines, soule, saut de poison, baiser de mariées; chansons; transporté d'œuf sur un charette; silence des grenouilles; ‡ corvée a misericorde; milods; leide; couponage; cartelage; barage; fouage; marechaussée; ban vin; ban d'adut; trousses; gelinage; civerage; taillabilité; vingtain; sterlage; bordelage; minage; ban de vendanges; droit d'accapte?§* In passing through many of the French provinces, I was struck with the various and heavy complaints of the farmers and little proprietors, of the feudal grievances, with the weight of which their industry was burthened; but I could not then conceive the multiplicity of the shackles which kept them poor and depressed. I understood it better afterwards, from the conversation and complaints of some grand seigneurs, as the revolution advanced; and I then learned, that the principal rental of many estates consisted in services and feudal tenures; by the baneful influence of which, the industry of the people was

* *Tiers Etat* Rennes, p. 159.

† Rennes, p. 57.

‡ This is a curious article: when the lady of the seigneur lies in, the people are obliged to beat the waters in marshy-districts, to keep the frogs silent; that she may not be disturbed; this duty, a very oppressive one, is commuted into a pecuniary fine.

§ *Resumé des cahiers*, tom. iii. p. 316, 317.

almost exterminated. In regard to the oppressions of the clergy, as to tithes, I must do that body a justice, to which a claim cannot be laid in England. Though the ecclesiastical tenth was levied in France more severely than usual in Italy, yet was it never exacted with such horrid greediness as is at present the disgrace of England. When taken in kind, no such thing was known in any part of France, where I made inquiries, as a tenth: it was always a twelfth, or a thirteenth, or even a twentieth of the produce. And in no part of the kingdom did a new article of culture pay any thing: thus turnips, cabbages, clover, chicorée, potatoes, &c. &c. paid nothing. In many parts, meadows were exempt. Silk worms nothing. Olives in some places paid—in more they did not. Cows nothing. Lambs from the 12th to the 21st. Wool nothing.—Such mildness, in the levy of this odious tax, is absolutely unknown in England. But mild as it was, the burden to people groaning under so many other oppressions, united to render their situation so bad that no change could be for the worse. But these were not all the evils with which the people struggled. The administration of justice was partial, venal, infamous. I have, in conversation with many very sensible men, in different parts of the kingdom, met with something of content with their government, in all other respects than this: but upon the question of expecting justice to be really and fairly administered, every one confessed there was no such thing to be looked for. The conduct of the parliaments was profligate and atrocious. Upon almost every cause that came before them, interest was openly made with the judges: and woe betided the man who, with a cause to support, had no means of conciliating favour, either by the beauty of a handsome wife, or by other methods. It has been said, by many writers, that property was as secure under the old government of France as it is in England; and the assertion might possibly be true, as far as any violence from the King, his ministers, or the great was concerned: but for all that mass of property, which comes in every country to be litigated in courts of justice, there was not even the shadow of security, unless the parties were totally and equally unknown, and totally and equally honest; in every other case, he who had the best interest with the judges, was sure to be the winner. To reflecting minds, the cruelty and abominable practice attend-

ing such courts are sufficiently apparent. There was also a circumstance in the constitution of these parliaments, but little known in England, and which, under such a government as that of France, must be considered as very singular. They had the power, and were in the constant practice of issuing decrees, without the consent of the crown, and which had the force of laws through the whole of their jurisdiction; and of all other laws, these were sure to be the best obeyed; for as all infringements of them were brought before sovereign courts, composed of the same persons who had enacted these laws (a horrible system of tyranny!) they were certain of being punished with the last severity. It must appear strange, in a government so despotic in some respects as that of France, to see the parliaments in every part of the kingdom making laws without the King's consent, and even in defiance of his authority. The English, whom I met in France in 1789, were surprised to see some of these bodies issuing arrets against the export of corn out of the provinces subject to their jurisdiction, into the neighbouring provinces, at the same time that the King, through the organ of so popular a minister as Mons. Necker, was decreeing an absolutely free transport of corn throughout the kingdom, and even at the requisition of the National Assembly itself. But this was nothing new; it was their common practice. The parliament of Rouen passed an arret against killing of calves: it was a preposterous one, and opposed by administration; but it had its full force; and had a butcher dared to offend against it, he would have found, by the rigour of his punishment, who was his master. Inoculation was favoured by the court in Louis XV.'s time; but the parliament of Paris passed an arret against it, much more effective in prohibiting, than the favour of the court in encouraging that practice. Instances are innumerable, and I may remark, that the bigotry, ignorance, false principles, and tyranny of these bodies were generally conspicuous; and that the court (taxation excepted), never had a dispute with a parliament, but the parliament was sure to be wrong. Their constitution, in respect to the administration of justice, was so truly rotten, that the members sat as judges, even in causes of private property, in which they were themselves the parties, and have, in this capacity, been guilty of oppressions and cruelties, which the crown has rarely dared to attempt.

It is impossible to justify the excesses of the people on their taking up arms; they were certainly guilty of cruelties; it is idle to deny the facts, for they have been proved too clearly to admit of a doubt. But is it really the people to whom we are to impute the whole? Or to their oppressors, who had kept them so long in a state of bondage! He who chooses to be served by slaves, and by ill-treated slaves, must know that he holds both his property and life by a tenure far different from those who prefer the service of well treated freemen; and he who dines to the music of groaning sufferers, must not, in the moment of insurrection, complain that his daughters are ravished, and then destroyed; and that his sons' throats are cut. When such evils happen, they surely are more imputable to the tyranny of the master, than to the cruelty of the servant. The analogy holds with the French peasants—the murder of a seigneur, or a chateau in flames, is recorded in every news paper; the rank of the person who suffers, attracts notice; but where do we find the register of that seigneur's oppressions of his peasantry, and his exactions of feudal services, from those whose children were dying around them for want of bread? Where do we find the minutes that assigned these starving wretches to some vile petty-fogger to be fleeced by impositions, and a mockery of justice, in the seigneurial courts? Who gives us the awards of the intendant and his *sub-delegués*, which took off the taxes of a man of fashion, and laid them with accumulated weight, on the poor, who were so unfortunate as to be his neighbours? Who has dwelt sufficiently upon explaining all the ramifications of despotism, legal, aristocratic, and ecclesiastical, pervading the whole mass of the people; reaching like a circulating fluid, the most distant capillary tubes of poverty and wretchedness? In these cases, the sufferers are too ignoble to be known; and the mass too indiscriminate to be pitied. But should a philosopher feel and reason thus? should he mistake the cause for effect? and giving all his pity to the few, feel no compassion for the many, because they suffer in his eyes not individually, but by millions? The excesses of the people cannot, I repeat, be justified; it would undoubtedly have done them credit, both as men and christians, if they had possessed their new acquired power with moderation. But let it be remembered, that the populace in no country ever use power with moderation; excess is inherent in their

aggregate constitution; and as every government in the world knows, that violence infallibly attends power in such hands, it is doubly bound in common sense, and for common safety, so to conduct itself, that the people may not find an interest in public confusions. They will always suffer much and long, before they are effectually roused; nothing, therefore, can kindle the flame, but such oppressions of some classes or order in the society, as give able men the opportunity of seconding the general mass; discontent will soon diffuse itself around; and if the government take not warning in time, it is alone answerable for all the burnings, and plunderings, and devastation, and blood that follow. The true judgment to be formed of the French revolution, must surely be gained, from an attentive consideration of the evils of the old government: when these are well understood—and when the extent and universality of the oppression under which the people groaned—oppression which bore upon them from every quarter, it will scarcely be attempted to be urged, that a revolution was not absolutely necessary to the welfare of the kingdom. Not one opposing voice* can, with reason, be raised against this assertion: abuses ought certainly to be corrected, and corrected effectually; this could not be done without the establishment of a new form of government; whether the form of govern-

* Many opposing voices have been raised; but so little to their credit, that I leave the passage as it was written long ago. The abuses that are rooted in all the old governments of Europe, give such numbers of men a direct interest in supporting, cherishing, and defending abuses, that no wonder advocates for tyranny, of every species, are found in every country, and almost in every company. What a mass of people, in every part of England, are some way or other interested in the present representation of the people, tithes, charters, corporations, monopolies, and taxation! and not merely to the things themselves, but to all the abuses attending them; and how many are there who derive their profit or their consideration in life, not merely from such institutions, but from the evils they engender! The great mass of the people, however, is free from such influence, and will be enlightened by degrees; assuredly they will find out, in every country of Europe, that by combinations, on the principles of liberty and property, aimed equally against regal, aristocratical and mobbish tyranny, they will be able to resist successfully, that variety of combination, which, on principles of plunder, and despotism, is every where at work to enslave them.

ment; whether the form that has been adopted were the best, is another question absolutely distinct. But that the above-mentioned detail of enormities practised on the people required some great change is sufficiently apparent."

Thus we have the *causes* of those violences, which the people of France committed at the beginning of the revolution. Mr. Young has fairly stated them. They were produced by those Nobles, Priests, and that Bourbon family, to seat whom in their power again we have saddled ourselves with an everlasting debt.

Now, unless we are ready to admit, that we are *worse* than the French naturally; that we are a more foolish, or a more wicked, or more sanguinary race, it can never be supposed, that we should have gone *so far* as the French went previous to the war of 1792; because we certainly had not, at that time, such oppressions to complain of and avenge. Indeed, all that the people of England complained of was, that they were not represented in parliament; and this had been complained of by PITT in terms more strong than by any other man that ever lived. He had gone so far as to say, that, without a reform in the parliament, it was *impossible*, that any Minister, in England, should be a Minister and an honest man. This grievance had long been complained of by the whole nation, those who were interested in the abuse excepted, and even these seemed to object more to the time and the manner of the proposed reform than to the thing itself.

At the breaking out of the French Revolution the people of England were, at first, astonished; but they soon began to perceive, that this event would compel the conceding of that reform in the parliament, which they had so long petitioned for in vain. Those in power saw it too. All communication was, by war, cut off between the two countries; reform did not take place; our system of government was now steeled instead of being softened; and by divers laws, still in existence, the liberties of the people were abridged, instead of being enlarged.

But, do I suppose, that the people would have stopped at the end of a Reform in the Commons House of Parliament? Frankly to speak, I do not believe they would. I think it would have been wise for them to stop there, but, I

do not think they would. The *Established Church* would have been abolished. There was, and there is, nobody who approves of *tythes*. We even *now* hear the land-occupiers, and even the land-holders, including many of the nobility, representing *tythes* as one of the causes of our inability to sell corn so cheap as the French; and, thus, after all, and even while we are paying armies to put down the French revolutionists, inculcating the wisdom of following their example in this very material point. So that, if to this dislike of *tythes* amongst the Church people themselves, amongst those whose relations, sons, fathers, brothers, own the *tythes*, what might not have been expected from the dissenters? From all those numerous sects, who look upon the Established Church, not only as a heavy burden to them, but as a great injury to religion itself? What mercy could she, as to her property, reasonably expect from these millions, whom she had so long kept in a state of depression, and whose teachers she had so long filled with envy?

The *Nobility* would have stood but little better chance. The nation was too full of knowledge; there were too many men of wealth and talent, not belonging to the *Noblesse*; there were too many opulent merchants and manufacturers and others, to have suffered the *Nobility* to remain. The orders of *Nobility* would, therefore, have been, in all likelihood, abolished. There is no doubt, that, either by a reformed parliament, or in consequence of popular menaces, the whole of the sinecure placemen, and nearly the whole of the Pensioners and Grantees would have been dismissed without a penny of compensation; and there is as little doubt but that the game-laws would have been wholly swept away.

I will allow, too, that the powers and expenses of the king and his family would have been greatly abridged; that they would have been reduced to be merely the Chief Magistrates of the country; that they would no longer have enjoyed *Droits of Admiralty*; and that all magnificence and show must have been laid aside. Whether this would have been wise or not is another question. Such was the temper of the time, that, I think, had it not been for the war, it would inevitably have taken place.

But, when I have made these admis-

sions, I am sure, that even George Rose cannot ask me to allow, that the people of England would have gone further; that they would have proceeded, as the French did, to the burning of Noblemen's houses, to the pillaging of their farms, the murder of themselves and their families, to the personal ill-treatment and robbery of the houses of the Clergy. To allow this would be to allow, that the people would have done that without provocation, which the people of France did with provocation; and this would be to allow, that the people of England are, by nature, a great deal less just and humane than the people of France.

I say *without provocation*, because, though the people of England had to complain of the want of being duly represented in parliament, and though they did complain of the law of *tythes* and some other grievances, all their complaints, in 1792, put together, did not amount to almost any one of the hundreds of oppressions under which the French people had groaned for centuries. The Clergy, in England, if they had great possessions, owed their preferment, in most cases, to patronage solely; if many of them were fox-hunters, or men of fashion, they were yet, generally speaking, very little inclined to oppression of any sort, and were as mild in their manners, and as kind and as liberal, in all respects, as any other gentlemen in the country. They were at the head of no intolerant Church. They had never murdered people for the love of Christ. If people went to hear them, it was well; if not, it was also well. Never was there in the whole world so inoffensive a Church.

The *Nobility*, with few exceptions, had long been in the habit of mixing indiscriminately amongst the opulent of all descriptions. In the chace, on the turf, at the gaming table, at the Bible Societies, at agricultural meetings, in Societies, and Clubs and Parties of all sorts, they had had the good sense to mix with the nation at large. They were, in general, the best and kindest landlords and masters, as they are still. And, which was more than all the rest in their favour, they joined to their affability and liberality their fair share of learning and talent.

In short, there was nothing in these two orders of men to call forth the hatred or vengeance of the people. Yet, such

was their alarm at the abolishing of the Church and of Tythes in France, that they instantly acted as if they had been of the same description as the persecuting Priests and petty lay Tyrants of that country, who were also called Clergy and Nobility, but who no more resembled our's than the poison-tree resembles the vine.

What have been the consequences of this their decision as to the freedom and happiness of France, the Continent of Europe, and of England, and what will, in all human probability, be the final consequences of it, to our Church and Nobility themselves, who, by this time, must begin to be frightened at their own success, is a subject into which I will not now enter. We all know, that there is an English army in France; that Hanoverian and other German armies, subsidised by us are there also; that the Bourbons are again upon the throne of that country; and that the Roman Catholics, stimulated by their Priests, are again, as during the reigns of former Bourbons, cutting the throats, mangling, and burning the bodies of Protestants. And, it is for us now to inquire, "how much more WE should have lost, than we have lost, if the war had not taken place."

Our losses are these: 1st, all that part of our incomes, or fruit of our labour, which have been taken away during the war for the purpose of carrying it on. 2d, All that part of our property, which has been taken and actually sold, or is now for sale, by the government, under what is called the redemption of the Land Tax. 3d, All that part of our property, or fruit of our labour, which is required to pay the interest of about 800 millions of Debt, occasioned solely by the war, and which will be required for ever. 4th, All that part of our property and the fruit of our labour which is required to maintain that increased standing army, and those innumerable pensioners and half-pay officers, naval and military, who have been created by the war. 5th, The permanent supply of Manufactures to the United States of America, which are now able to manufacture for themselves, and this solely in consequence of the war, because the Orders in Council, Impressments from American ships, Non-importations, Embargoes, and finally war with America were all produced by our war

against the French. 6th, That state of comparatively light taxation and ease, and plenty and cheapness, which left our rich people no reason to wish to migrate to foreign countries, which enabled our farmers to sell their produce as cheap as the French, and which enabled our manufacturers to undersell all the world. These, as no one can deny, are our losses by the war. By peace I allow, that our Nobility might have lost their titles, our Clergy their tythes, our Sinécure Placemen and Pensioners their incomes from those sources, our King and Royal Family much of their power and splendour; and that we should have lost the *Borough System* I am quite certain. Whether what we might thus have lost by peace would have been greater than what we have lost by war, I must now leave for you to decide.

"Aye," some one may say, "but you have forgotten our gains by the war. You have forgotten the immense mass of glory." I really do not see, that of military or naval glory we have gained a single particle by this war. Nay, I think we have lost.

The war in Spain and Portugal exhibited a mere branch of the army in France fighting nearly the whole of our military means, aided by immense fleets, and aided by the chief part of the people of those two countries. That war continued many years. There were Spanish armies and Portuguese armies to assist us. The two governments were on our side. We had fleets in every harbour. The French were in an enemy's country. And they were not driven out, at last, till all the rest of Europe were pouring their armies into France on the east and on the north.

We were victorious at the battle of Waterloo; but we had with us an immense army of Hanoverians, Belgians, and Prussians, and, what is more, we were fighting, as all the people of France thought, for the King of France. We have now an army in France, but, it is there by the aid of allies and troops subsidised by us, amounting to one million and eleven thousand men. In short, our army is in France with the armies of all the rest of Europe at their back, and with France divided in itself besides. Is this the *harvest of glory*, of which we have heard so much talk? And is it this

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glory which is to compensate us for all our sufferings and all our losses? When English Kings sailed from Southampton with bands of English followers, landed in France, fought battles there, defeated the Kings of France, and finally caused the King of England to be crowned at Paris and to reign as King of France by his Vice-Roys for several years, that was, indeed, *military glory*; but, in this war, the very *title of King of France*, which seemed to perpetuate the recollection of that glory, has been given up, and that, too, observe, as a preparative peace with Napoleon, who, it was clearly foreseen, would not have acknowledged the title, though the Bourbons had always acknowledged it. And, is it, then, for us Englishmen, whose ancestors really conquered France, as the French had before really and more effectually conquered England, to brag about the glory of getting to Paris along with a million of German troops? And, that, too, after we have so recently seen the French, unaided by any other nation, sally forth and really conquer every state on the Continent of Europe, Russia only excepted, and that excepted only because France was then co-operating with the German allies.

But, have the English army given no proofs of their determined bravery, during these long wars? Oh! yes, a great many. They have acted like very gallant men. Their officers, of all ranks, have discovered great talents, and wonderful zeal. But, is this any thing *new*? When were the people of these islands not brave? When were they not true to their colours? Did it need the battles in Egypt, in Naples, or in Spain, to acquire a character for valour for those whose ancestors had conquered Canada, and who, before that, had fought under Marlborough? Whence comes the notion, and what can be its *motive*, that *valour* is something *new* in the English, Scots, and Irish character? Besides, to say nothing about our many reverses in Europe, and especially that of the *Helder*, are we to be made forget what has passed in America? And if there has been a balance of accounts on the side of Canada, can we quite overlook the famous battle of *New Orleans*? In that battle there were engaged from ten to twelve thousand British troops, sent from France, under GENERAL PACKENHAM, who had been so much extolled for his exploits in the

Peninsula of Europe. This army was furnished with all the means of destruction. A great fleet, with its seamen and marines aided it in all its operations. The American General Jackson, a lawyer by profession (who had never before, I believe, seen a single regular regiment in the character of an enemy), with the inhabitants of New Orleans, aided by the militia of Tennessee and Kentucky, had assigned to him the task of defending the city against this army of regulars, and, as they were called, of invincibles. With his untutored bands, even whose officers were not in uniform, he, with inferior numbers, attacked the British army twice, in the night-time, before they were ready for the main attack on him. On the 8th of January, 1815, they advanced to that attack, with rockets, bombs, an immense train of artillery, and with all the apparatus for storming, the soldiers and sailors having been previously stimulated, and steeled against relaxation, by assurances the most gratifying to their tastes and wishes. They finally arrived at the point of onset: the faggots, which they carried to make them a road over the works, were just tossing into the ditch: in idea the city with all its spoils were in their possession. At that moment the brave and prudent enemy, with as much coolness as if he had been aiming at harmless birds, opened his fire upon them, and swept them down like grass before the scythe of the mower. He sallied in pursuit, marching over blood and brains and mangled carcases, and finally, to use the words of his countrymen, "drove the survivors to their ships, and had them carry to England the proof of the fact, that the soil of freedom was not to be invaded with impunity." There were more than half as many British soldiers and sailors killed and wounded in this battle as in the battle of Waterloo. And, is this battle to pass for nothing? Is this to form no item in the account of *glory*? Is there no deduction to be made here from the *gain of glory* by the war?

As to our *Navy*, when was it not victorious over all its enemies? When did it not, since the days of the Stuarts, drive the navies of the French, Dutch and Spaniards from the ocean? When was it not thought disgraceful for an English ship to yield to a force considerably superior to her own? When was it thought glorious for an En-

English squadron to take a single frigate? When was it known that English ships yielded, one after another, in every part of the ocean, to ships of the same class and force? When was it ever dreamt of that whole squadrons of English ships of war would be beaten and captured by squadrons of inferior force? *Never, till the late war against America*; which war, we must always bear in mind, grew out of, and formed a part of, the war against the French.

Thus, then, stands the account of *glory*. How that of *National Prosperity* stands we shall see in another Letter.

I am your faithful friend,

WM. COBBETT.

THE EMPEROR NAPOLEON'S TWO CONDITIONAL ABDICATIONS.

MR. COBBETT. — It is clear that the imperial sceptre wielded by Napoleon Bonaparte in France, was much too constitutional and splendid ever to have been voluntarily and *unconditionally* abdicated. The greatness of his talents, coupled with the devotion of the French nation to his imperial sway, would have rendered such a proceeding an unwarrantable violation of public faith, and of political justice. He, therefore, in both instances of abdication, was induced to the measure by feelings of culpable vacillation and philanthropy, rather than by those energetic sentiments which, until then, had uniformly characterised his military intrepidity and prowess. On both occasions, his own personal renown, and the high military character of the French nation, required that he should have carried the conflict to the utmost length of his resources, nor for one moment to have thought of compromising the spirit and independence of the country, by submitting to *dishonourable conditions* of peace. Treason and every variety of perfidy might, and actually did, in some measure, betray his misplaced confidence; but yet the large majority of the population of France always was, and ever would have remained, sufficiently true to the national independence, and to the military glory contended for, to have enabled him finally to have triumphed over all the base calculations of bad faith, cowardice, and slavery. A disposition to rescue France from becoming a scene of military devastation, fatally misled the Emperor Napoleon to the paralyzing measure of accepting *conditions* to withdraw

his powerful influence from the destinies of France, and that, too, at the very period when its redoubled exertion was demanded by the unhappy exigency of circumstances. The guilty authors of the *first abdication* should have been crushed under his indignant rejection of the treasonable proposal. The same fate should also have awaited the dastardly projection of the *second*. Had that been done, in either instance, in a manner suited to the talents and resources of Bonaparte, France would have ultimately triumphed over all her enemies, and her Emperor the most legitimate, the most virtuous, and the most popular upon the face of the earth, would be now securely seated on a throne of patriotism, the most honourable and the most amiable in the world. Instead of this deserved elevation, the great, the matchless hero of the age, is sunk to the almost ebb of degradation, and all this has resulted from *conditional* abdication! Now, what were the conditions? Those of the first abdication were the sovereignty of Elba; the society of his wife and child; the Duchies of Parma, Placentia, and Giustella; an annual pecuniary stipend, &c.—Was either of these conditions faithfully observed? Was it not even in contemplation to remove the Emperor from the acknowledged seat of his sovereignty? Were his wife and child restored to him? Were the stipulated duchies appropriated to them? Was the stipend paid?—If not, did not his claim to the imperial sovereignty of France, &c. &c. revert to him in full right? They were surrendered *conditionally* and *conditionally* they were resumed. Who, then, can have either the arrant impudence or the hopeless folly to say, that his resumption of the imperial throne was an usurpation? He was clearly entitled to it by virtue of the original appointment, and confirmed in it by the renewed suffrages of the French nation, by an unexampled, but by a truly exemplary, display of genuine patriotism. In the *second* instance, the Emperor Napoleon abdicated on the *avowed condition* of the prompt and unequivocal succession of his son. That alternative being refused, he *ipso facto* remained Emperor: his throne was not vacated; and he is at this moment, in every rightful view of his title, as much Emperor of the French as he ever was at any former period of his reign; and, as long as his life shall en-

sure, will he continue to be so, if he should not *unconditionally* abdicate in favour of his son. In favour of any other person he cannot abdicate consistently with the constitutional code of the French nation, declared, accepted, confirmed, and solemnized at the late *Champ de Mai*!—a scene that will reflect immortal honour on its patriotic authors. The spirit of the French *Champ de Mai* will, sooner or later, manifest itself in the very hearts of all the different nations that have been ignorantly and delusively led to war against the sacred and indestructible principles of civil liberty. Then the abettors of tyranny, of all degrees and hues, will learn to respect the sovereignty of the people, and duly to venerate laws, founded on the unalienable rights of man. In the meantime it deserves to be recorded, that the merits of the contest for the throne of France stand thus:—Bonaparte has been twice called to that situation, by elective suffrage, amounting almost to national unanimity, and has never descended from that high station but on certain *conditions*, which *conditions* have never been fulfilled. He has, therefore, not ceased to reign as Emperor, and is actually the *legitimate* occupant of the French throne. Louis XVIII. has never been legitimately chosen as King, but at present fills that situation by force of foreign arms, and is now received by the French people voluntarily or patriotically. It never, therefore, can be the interest of Louis's friends to talk of the *French Usurper*. If there be laws or usages for crowned heads when falling into each other's power, it will be now seen how the *Emperor* of the French will be permanently and finally treated (for *Emperor* of the French he is, in spite of their teeth), and at his decease, his son, if alive, will legally succeed him, with such contingent reversions or remainders to his family as the French constitutional code on that point shall have decreed and settled. If, in dread of the French Emperor's intellectual and military greatness, and in utter defiance of every principle of justice, they should so hamper him as to put his tremendous power in a state of abeyance, it will hereafter become a sort of imperial and royal precedent to punish captured Sovereigns by subjecting them to privations, in the exact proportion as they may chance to abound or be deficient in intellect. Exile and imprisonment will ac-

cordingly await the wise, whilst voluntary retirement and personal liberty will be the portion of the foolish, in the presumption that the latter can do no wrong. This may be the wayward decree of *imbecile* Sovereigns; but it appears to be much too *foolish*, to be ever either recognised or acted on by the *wiser* part of their fraternity.

HONESTAS.

NATIONAL LIBERTY.

MR. CORBET,—It was not necessary that the civil liberty, which was asserted as the ultimate object of the revolutionary proceedings in France, should have been for a moment subverted, to convince the enlightened and reflecting, that such effects must always result from such causes. The true interests of national liberty can only be securely rooted on public feelings of intelligent patriotism. Conviction on the important principles of civic rights, can neither be tampered with nor overcome. All the craft and chicanery of despotism, however exercised, can effect no change in the honest persuasions of true patriotism. Love of country inevitably induces a detestation of despotism, and the benevolence of the feeling is co-extended with the habitable globe. The British or French patriot respectively looks first at home, next to his nearest neighbour, and then to every nation indiscriminately, wherever situated, or however circumstanced. It is this sacred spirit that kindles a zeal ever active, and ever invincible; it cherishes the friends of liberty; it abominates tyranny, and lends its fostering solicitude and aid wherever it may be required. It is in the union of this virtuous spirit that is to be recognised a moral worth, embodied in a degree of physical strength, that would render its authority, when duly exerted, absolutely irresistible. Dissensions on unimportant points might arise, but fundamentally all is harmony and concentration. This is human nature; it has been exhibited in France; it has been awakened in Europe at large; and has already once laid her vapouring tyranny in prostration and shame. May not the same principle be rekindled; and if it should, why may it not be equally destructive to all despotic invasion of its rights? Wherever human nature exists, the capability of honest and indignant resistance to un-

warrantable oppression may be found. It is only necessary that the offended people should be sufficiently unprejudiced and numerous, at once to perceive their unalienable rights, and heroically to embattle themselves for conquering them. It cannot be doubted that, sooner or later, all mankind will be free; that tyranny and slavery will be objects of execrated remembrance rather than of actual experience; and who can say that the present proceedings in France are not calculated to induce the re-active and regenerating spirit, that must terminate the existence of despotism in that agitated country, and ultimately, by the patriotic example afforded to others similarly aggrieved nations, accomplish the deliverance of the whole human race from the grasp and slavery of the hydra monster?

It is easy to exhibit military tinsel, to proclaim to ignorant and unsuspecting nations, principles and objects never felt nor intended, and to feign pretences for overrunning a whole country. This indeed is the common course of despotic promises and of despotic performances. But, are these enormities to be for ever perpetrated with impunity? Will it again be believed, that an authority disclaiming every principle of political liberty and justice, will for a moment respect either in an invaded country? Is it not the

policy of all legislative tyranny to extend that iniquitous system wherever the sword can obtrude it? When will human nature show itself worthy of its high destinies, by valiantly asserting its birth-right liberties? Unite, ye sons and daughters of man in the grand cause of National Liberty, and you will render yourselves as free as the air you breath! Not a tyrant will then dare to appear in the political arena of mankind, nor will such a monster be contemplated but with horror and detestation. Where is a potentate to be found, however gorgeously attired, or however surrounded by flatterers, knaves, and fools, that can be compared, in real unborrowed personal dignity, to JAMES MADISON, President of the United States of America? If ambition can be ever virtuous, it can only possess that quality in the elevated station of such simple unadorned merit as is to be found in the personal exterior and in all the legislative designations of the American President. Here is a perfect model of *official patriotism*, in the character of the first magistrate, the sole objects of which, are *realities*, great national realities—not ridiculous, vain, and contemptible *formalities*, formalities better adapted to objects of buffoonery, than to those of national legislation.

CIVIS.

PRICES CURRENT in London; Prices of FUNDS in England and France; and Number of BANKRUPTCIES in Great Britain, during the last week.

BREAD.—The Quartern Loaf, weighing 4lb. 5oz. 8drams, 11d.

WHEAT.—The Winchester Bushel, or 8 gallons (corn and beer measure), taken on an average of all the prices at Mark Lane Market, 6s. 9d.

MEAT.—The average wholesale price per Pound weight, at Smithfield Market, where the skin and offal are not reckoned at any thing in the price.—Beef, 6d; Mutton, 7d; Veal, 8½d; Pork, 7d; Lamb, 8½d.

WOOL.—Vigonia, 16s.; Portugal, 3s.; Spanish Lamb, 9s. 3d.; Leonosa, 7s. 3d.; Segovia, 5s. 9d.; Seville, 4s. 6d.;—This wool is washed and picked.—Wool Imported last week:—From Germany, 12,140lbs.—From Spain, 17,312lbs.—From France, 1,760lbs.—From Holland, 11,520lbs.

BULLION.—Gold in bars, £4 8s. per ounce.—New Dollars, 5s. 6d. each.—Silver in bars, None.—N. B. These are the prices in Bank of England paper.—In gold coin of the English Mint, an ounce of gold in bars is worth Sl. 17s. 10½d.—Standard Silver in bars, in the coin of the English Mint, is worth 5s. 2d. an ounce. In the same coin a Spanish Dollar is worth 4s. 6d.

ENGLISH FUNDS.—The price of the THREE Per Centum Consolidated Annuities, in Bank Paper; 57½.

FRENCH FUNDS.—The price of the FIVE Per Cents, in gold and silver money; 61.

BANKRUPTCIES.—Number, during the last week, published in the London Gazette, 34.

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